Someone connected Windows XP to the internet, and it didn't survive long

Everyone knows that putting Windows XP online in 2024 is a bad idea, but not everyone knows just how bad an idea it actually is.

BY SIMON BATT
PUBLISHED 1 DAY AGO

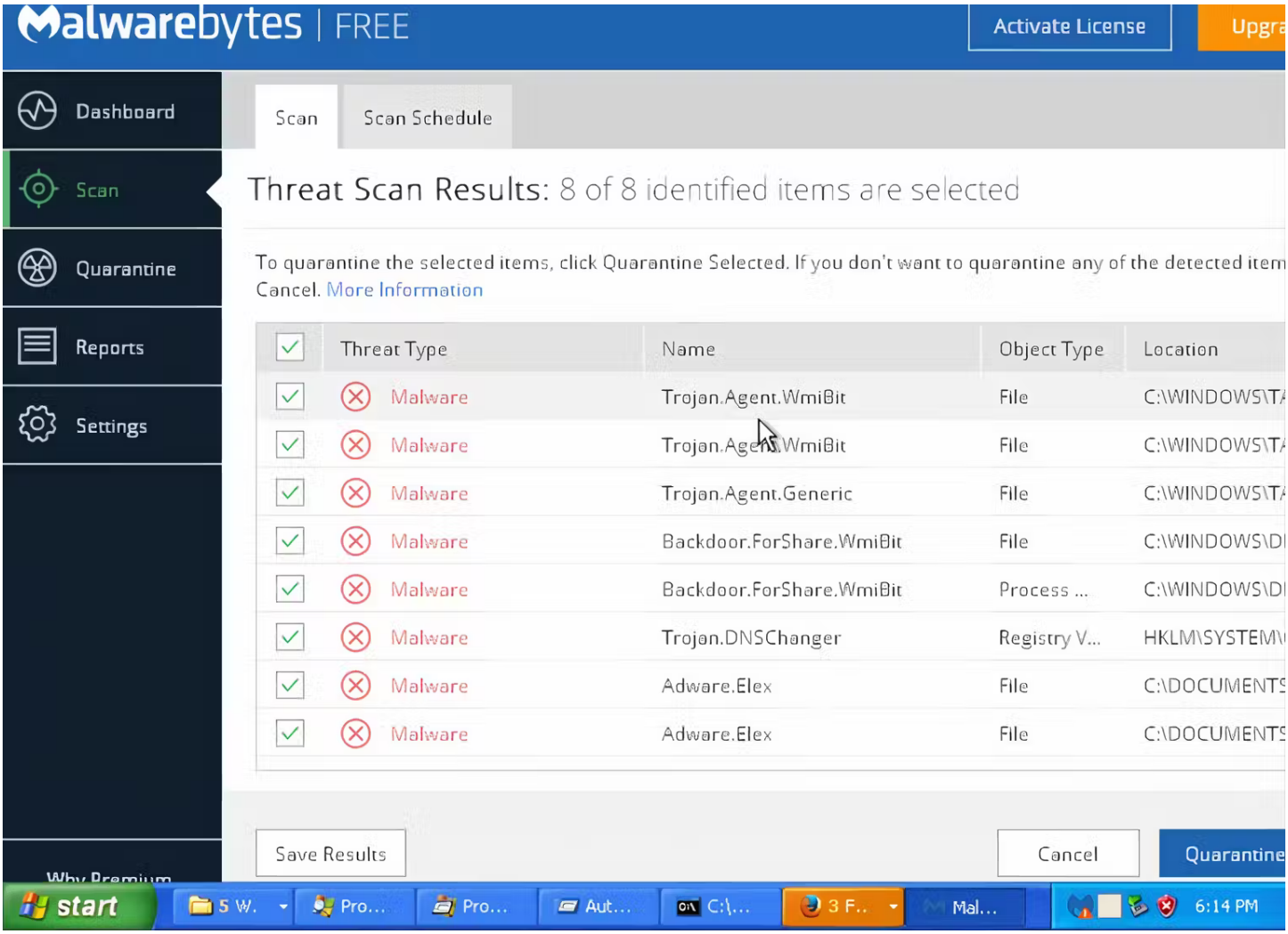

*Image Credit: **Eric Parker / YouTube***

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Connecting Windows XP to the internet is extremely risky, leaving it vulnerable to numerous viruses.**
- **Hackers can easily target vulnerable operating systems online, bombarding them with malware.**
- **Even without browsing, Windows XP can catch viruses just by being connected to the internet.**

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How easy do you think it is for Windows XP to get a virus in 2024? Perhaps you

assume you could happily browse the internet until you stumble upon a shady website or virus-infected vile, after which it goes downhill fast. As it turns out, simply hooking up Windows XP to the internet puts it in a huge amount of danger, as someone proved in a recent YouTube video.

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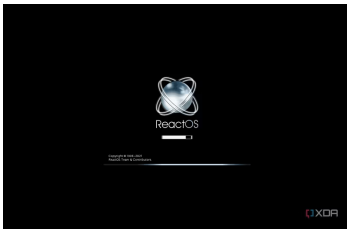

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Connecting Windows XP to the internet is even worse an idea than we first thought

This experiment was performed by Eric Parker on YouTube, who decided to connect a Windows XP virtual machine to the internet. You may imagine that putting Windows XP online is like stepping through an active minefield, but as Eric proved, it's more like standing in the middle of a pack of hungry wolves.

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As Eric explains, you don't even need to browse the internet to catch something nasty on a Windows XP machine. Hackers can use tools to scan the web for computers running vulnerable operating systems. And once they locate one (like someone going online with a decades-old operating system, for instance), they immediately begin bombarding it with viruses. Sure enough, Eric leaves the system "to cook" for a few minutes, and once he returns, there are tell-tale signs in the Task Manager that something nasty has gotten in.

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Granted, Eric turned off the firewall on Windows XP before he started the experiment, but we have a sneaking suspicion that a security suite that hasn't been updated for at least a decade doesn't have much chance against modern tactics. After leaving XP to simmer for a bit longer, Eric performed a deep dive into the malicious processes running on the PC, finding examples like a virus that tried to disguise itself by claiming that it was developed by "Microsoft compilation."

Once Eric installed Malwarebytes and performed a scan, it detected eight viruses, all of which were caught by Windows XP simply having an internet connection. As such, if you're feeling nostalgic for the Windows operating systems of yore, it might be better to grab an old Windows wallpaper than try to get XP running a good 20-odd years after its release.

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Simon is a Computer Science BSc graduate who has been writing about technology since 2014, and using Windows machines since 3.1. After working for an indie game studio and acting as the family's go-to technician for all computer issues, he found his...

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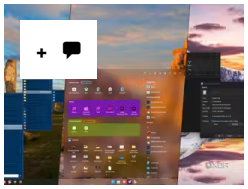

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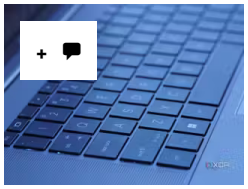

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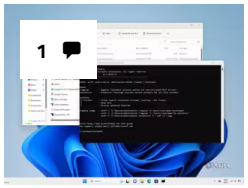

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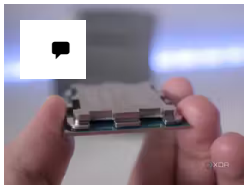

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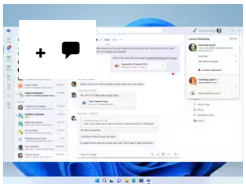

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